Spica Served 10 Years Of Life Term, Paroled In Killing Of Real Estate Man

John Paul Spica was paroled from the State penitentiary in October 1973 at the age of 36 after serving 10 years of a life sentence in the fatal shooting of an Uplands Park real estate dealer in 1962.

John J. Myszak, 50, the real estate dealer, was shot four times from an automobile as he stood in the driveway of a friend and business associate in Normandy on the night of June 8, 1962.

Spica, then 25, was accused of arranging the killing after he was approached by Marie Myszak, the dead man's wife, who wanted her husband murdered.

During the sensational case, which was given much publicity here, the 48-year-old widow admitted plotting the killing of her husband with Spica. However, she said she told Spica to call off the deal about three weeks before the murder because she couldn't raise the $3,000 Spica demanded.

Mrs. Myszak said she wanted her husband killed because she was "fed up" with the repeated beatings he had given her. She also was the beneficiary of about $165,000 in life insurance carried by him.

Spica, although never accused as the actual killer, was convicted by a St. Louis County jury in May 1963 of conspiring to murder Myszak and sentenced to life in prison. Before his conviction, Spica had been arrested in investigations of several burglaries, but had never been convicted of a felony. But at the time of his arrest in the Myszak case, police detectives described him as a "well-known St. Louis hoodlum."

Spica began serving his life term in the State Penitentiary on July 1, 1963.

Mrs. Myszak was acquitted by a St. Louis County jury in January 1964 of the murder of her husband.

While Spica was serving his sentence, he pleaded guilty to charges of second-degree burglary in connection with a break-in at a Wellston jewelry store in 1962, and stealing over $50 by deceit in an automobile deal. He was sentenced to two years on each conviction, the sentences to run concurrently with his life sentence.

Spica is the son of Paul J. Spica, a clerk in the county magistrate courts and former Democratic politician. Paul Spica is a former Democratic committeeman from Normandy Township. John Spica lives with his father in Normandy.